

Table 5-2 shows the average number of people per dwelling unit over the last three decades. The table indicates a general trend towards fewer people per household. Fewer people per household in the future impacts trip generation rates in developing the future year model. See Chapter 7 for more information about generation rates.

Table 5-2

Average Persons Per Dwelling Unit		Data Source - US Census Bureau			
		1970	1980	1990	2000
Cajah's Mountain	not available	not available	2.776	2.384	
Gamewell	not available	not available	2.470	2.428	
Granite Falls	2.945	2.630	2.371	2.529	
Hudson	3.230	2.732	2.391	2.325	
Lenoir	3.032	2.495	2.239	2.343	
Sawmills	not available	not available	2.544	2.534	
Caldwell County	3.139	2.651	2.401	2.455	
North Carolina	3.098	2.585	2.353	2.489	

Economy and Employment

One of the more important factors to be considered in estimating the future traffic growth of an area is its economic base. The number of employers and the employee's income or purchasing power influences how much population can be supported in the area and the number of motor vehicles that will be locally owned and operated. Generally, as the family income increases so does the number of vehicles owned, as well as the number of vehicle trips generated per day by each household. An accurate estimate of an areas future economy is essential to predicting future travel demand. Factors which will influence economic growth and development in the Caldwell County Urban Area over the 25 year planning period is the continued residential development in the southern portion of the county and the continued commercial development along the US 321 and US 64/NC 18 corridors. Table 5-3 shows the employment stratification for the Caldwell County Urban Area that was derived from the 1997 socio-economic field survey data.

Table 5-3

Employment Stratification for the Caldwell County Urban Area (from IDS)

Type of Employment	Employment 1997	% of Total 1997	Employment 2025	% of Total 2025
Industrial	13,248	53%	15,914	49.5%
Retail	3,010	12%	4,027	12.5%
Highway Retail	1,574	6.3%	2,118	6.5%
Office	1,821	7.3%	2,201	6.9%
Service	5,354	21.4%	7,898	24.6%
Total	25,043	100.0%	32,158	100.0%